

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 465 075

CE 083 327

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TITLE School of Travel: An Exploration of the Convergence of Andragogy and Travel.
PUB DATE 2002-00-00
NOTE 8p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Active Learning; *Adult Education; *Adult Learning; Adult Students; *Andragogy; *Experiential Learning; Learning Strategies; Leisure Time; Tourism; *Travel
IDENTIFIERS Knowles (Malcolm S)

ABSTRACT

Travel can incorporate issues of adult education; in fact, andragogy can provide the impetus for education in a new school of travel. Knowles' andragogical model (1984) is comprised of these five tenets: the learner is self-directing and in charge; the learner's background and individual experiences are taken into consideration; a readiness and internal motivation to learn is assumed; the adult learner is life-centered and task-centered; and adults learn within the context of work, family, and community. Andragogy seems more appropriate to learning in travel than the typical pedagogy represented in mass tourism. The literature indicates an increase in leisure time and of participation in travel, especially in educational travel. Research indicates that interaction with locals, preparation for the trip, having expert study guides, self-directed planning, length of stay, journaling, and discussion have the potential to foster education and meaningful travel. These nicely coincide with the philosophy of andragogy, especially mutual planning, an environment for participative learning, and discussing and chronicling one's experiences. (Contains 16 references) (YLB)

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School of Travel

An Exploration of the Convergence of Andragogy and Travel

Donald N. Roberson, Jr.

Social Context in Adult Education

School of Travel

A recent article in the Wall Street Journal indicated that worldwide travel and tourism is a 3.6 trillion dollar a year industry affecting 231 million jobs (Wall Street Journal, January 11, 1999). Millions of adults especially from western countries are choosing to travel internationally as well as locally in increasing numbers. Sirgy and Su (2000) refer to a study indicating tourism has quickly grown into one of the world's largest industries, surpassing that of autos, steel, electronics, and agriculture. An increasing number of older and retired adults have become modern day explorers with money, time, and energy to see 'what's on the other side of the hill' more than any other age segment. In order to capture this lucrative market the tourist industry has become like a runaway train promising the ticket buyer everything from romance to thrills to serenity. Yet, this creative business may logistically lure travelers to empty destinations and leave them unfulfilled and disillusioned.

A majority of research on travel and tourism deals with travel preferences of market segments, and as such this information serves marketing interests rather than travelers. Research journals are dominated by pontificated studies on travel and tourism in a mind boggling array of issues from tourism in war torn areas, to heritage and cultural visitation, to the reflection of self image in travel (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Anson, 1999). The focus of this work seems how to profit from this market rather than meeting the needs of travelers, capitalism and consumerism seems hidden behind the veneer of glossy promises in travel and tourism. Research is needed that more clearly defines the impact of travel on the traveler. The sheer volume of travelers attests to the popularity of travel, and many travelers communicate the impact of travel in providing a new context for learning. I suggest a more accurate focus of travel transcends typical perspectives of recreation and leisure into notions of learning. The travel that seems to belie consumerism is that which the travelers indicate they have learned about themselves, their world at home, and gained new information. I suggest there is a need for an educational philosophy of travel in order to address the needs of travelers that evolve from entertainment to the focus of learning. This paper presents how travel can incorporate issues

of adult education. In addition this paper will address current topics in the literature of travel as well as how andragogy can provide the impetus for education in a new school of travel.

Andragogy

Andragogy is defined as the ways of helping adults learn, as opposed to pedagogy that focuses on how children learn. Interestingly, this concept originated on a trip when Malcolm Knowles explained his ideas of self-directed learning to a Yugoslavian cohort, his friend proclaimed you are describing 'andragogy' (Merriam & Brockett, 1997). Like many theories and concepts in adult education, ideas about andragogy are evolving; recently Knowles has clarified his concept to include the following dimensions of andragogy. Adults know why they want to learn and are self-motivated. Adults see themselves as mature and want to be treated with self-respect from teachers, they will respond to this equality when given self-direction. Adults enter education with a great deal of experiences that augments their education. Adults are more balanced or life centered, they understand more about life and how it works. Adults that are internally motivated will respond to this education, rather than being externally motivated (Merriam & Brockett).

Malcolm Knowles (1984) continues his perspective on adult education in his book entitled "Andragogy in Action". Andragogy, the art and science of helping adults learn, centers on several of the following topics. There will be an interest in the individual, rather than an attempt for all students to complete the same work. The facilitator will encourage participatory activities from learners rather than teacher centered activities. This is based on the primary foundation that pedagogy is more focused on children, which includes structure, authority, discipline, and merit. Andragogy would be more informal, allowing the learners to be involved in their own learning experience as well as helping to set the parameters of the experience.

Knowles (1984) delineates this further in his andragogical model that is comprised of five tenets. First, the learner is self-directing and in charge of their education. Second, the learner's background and individual experiences are taken into consideration. The facilitator acknowledges each participant brings to the activity a great volume and quality of experiences, this makes them the greatest resource within the learning environment. Third, andragogy assumes there is a readiness to learn. The adult learner brings with them a need to know, a desire to learn something which will impact their life. Fourth, the adult learner is life-centered and task centered; adults learn within the context of work, family, and community. Fifth, there is an internal motivation to learn. The facilitator acknowledges the participant will continue to learn outside of the activity; this may be the most important segment of the learning experience.

Continuing the ideas of androgogy, Malcolm (1984) states that andragogy is a process of learning. This process involves the facilitator's role in helping to set the environment where the learner assumes responsibility for his or her own learning. This involves a climate where mutual, trust, support, openness, and pleasure is acknowledged. Mutual planning between participants and the facilitator is taken into consideration. The individual learners are encouraged to

diagnose their own needs to learn. The learners are formulating, designing, and carrying out their own objectives and plans. These personal learning contracts help to solidify the art and science of the andragogical model. Lastly, the participants are involved in a democratic evaluation of the process.

The andragogical method has been applied to a wide variety of settings, in a variety of educational situations. Further this does not appear to be culture bound, having been successfully used in many countries and with various socioeconomic backgrounds. The concept of andragogy has been used in technical science as well as in humanities; also it does not appear to be age restricted. Research indicates that this model is congruent with adult's methods of learning. Of all the various aspects of this model, climate setting may be the most widely adopted, but self-directed learning, contract learning, individual instruction, experiential learning, process design, peer helping, self-diagnosis, and self-evaluation are prominent practices (Knowles, 1984). Concerning the topic of learning in travel, androgogy seems to be more appropriate than the typical pedagogy represented in mass tourism.

Travel and Tourism Literature

There is an increase in leisure time as well as an increase of participants in travel, especially in educational travel (Bogder, 1998). Many people are bored with the typical two-week vacation and desire travel experiences that reflect personal development. Various organizations such as Smithsonian, Travel Learn, and Elderhostel are offering affordable travel that taps into the growing market of baby boomers that have more money for goals such as personal development and education. The foundation for learning in travel is preparation for the trip, having on site experts, top lodging, and interaction with locals (Globetrotting 101, 1992). This article stresses the importance of a study leader that will accompany the group and create an environment for learning. Similar concepts are presented in Damon's (1990) perspective on travel. Rather than relying on tour agencies he encourages the traveler to become self-directed by making their own plans. The plethora of travel literature that lines the shelves of many bookstores as well as Internet connection, has rendered the impalpable difficulty of travel easier and more accessible. However, if one is on a group tour there will be large segments of unscheduled time, rather than retreating into the enclave of a hotel, he encourages travelers to embark on smaller voyages to meet locals as well as discover authentic places. These andragogical ideas foster experiential education by encouraging the learner in travel to become acquainted with some of the native language as well as the location. He suggests making a local contact before the trip; this has become much easier with the Internet or from people who may be from this area (Damon). Katharine Ericson (1984) encourages the traveler to return to the idea of a "wanderjahre" in order to gain the most from the travel experience. During the Middle Ages after an apprenticeship, a young adult would leave their teacher and embark on a "wanderjahre". This would be approximately a year's worth of travel from city to city where the individual would attempt to perform their trade in a new location with a new group of people. This forces the apprentices to a new place, to meet new people, to learn from others, and to become independent. Eventually they had to

return to the original teacher and share their experiences, resulting in the full privilege of the apprenticeship. Similar to andragogy, this concept is that most learning occurs outside of the traditional classroom. Traveling in new places, meeting new people, interacting with other cultures will provide an environment where the traveler can personally participate in self-directed learning. Ericson further speaks on the potential impact of a trip, expanding one's ideas and deepening one's cultural experience that will add to one's life and professional experience. Even if one cannot spend an entire year, the concept of staying in one place for two weeks rather than trying 'to do a country in one day' can impact the learning.

If a potential traveler is seeking to have a learning vacation, the researcher can apply self-directed knowledge by investigating the publication by Fodor (1994), entitled "Great American Learning Vacations". This manual for self-discovery includes various trips such as archeological digs, birding, garden tours, nature camps, painting, and volunteer vacations. Each type of learning experience is covered in detail from price to the exact location and how to get in touch with the agency. Another source of learning is easily found within interactive CD - Rom multimedia experiences. Although this is no replacement for actual travel, yet this self-directed media can enable potential travelers to prepare for one's trip. As a result of knowledge found on the Internet as well as CD-Rom, the student of travel can learn language, see potential sites, and understand more about the culture (Chenuau, 2000).

Kuramoto (1990) takes this similar idea and encourages travelers, especially those in a career conducive to a sabbatical, to spend a year overseas. Typical travel does not allow one the time that is needed to really get to know a country. Living abroad can be a very rewarding experience. She suggests preparing for one year in advance by asking others who have done similar experiences for their advice. The author advises reading about the country, learning some of the language, and talking to people who are from this area. Living abroad instead of just being a traveler force one to make personal adjustments as opposed to merely passing through.

Experiential education, which reflects ideas of andragogy, can create an environment where the traveler can gain skills from practical experiences (Forster & Prinz, 1988). This study investigates the outcomes of travel on students who participated in specific travel learning experiences, for example instead of reading about the forests in the Pacific Northwest, the learners travel to the area. Cognitive academics seem to have replaced the more historical concept of experiential learning in our academic settings. This call for direct learning and involvement shows four specific outcomes as a result of this type of experience. First, the travelers have an enhanced comprehension and retention rather than students in traditional classroom settings. Second, the participant has the opportunity to see the topic of study from within and its in actual location. Third, there are positive changes in stereotypes about culture. Fourth, these travelers have an improved attitude of learning that translates to other topics. Keeping journals and writing about one's experiences help to carry out self-directed cognition in actual locations. Travel study is a new type of learning that has been shown to stimulate and increase understanding

rather than traditional pedagogical concepts (Forster & Prinz).

Another type of travel that fosters andragogy is the rapidly growing segment of ecotourism (Kimmel, 1999). This nature-oriented experience is an opportunity for experiential learning by allowing travelers first-hand experience in natural locations. This controversial segment of travel has positive and negative aspects. Bringing large numbers of tourists to delicate natural locales around the globe may be increasing the further development of these sensitive areas. However, Kimmel shows that ecotourism in general helps to develop an affection for the world, focuses on the emotional aspect of the traveler, and that usually the guides are effective in providing direction and leadership for educational experiences. In addition, the guides are experts in the locale, and with the use of journaling and discussion, the climate is set for reception of knowledge.

A study by Long and Zoller-Hodges (1995) indicates the potential of Elderhostel in providing situations of learning for older adults. Reflecting a philosophy of andragogy, the learning impacted the lives of the participants. Rather than just retaining new concepts, these participants felt they had been changed by new attitudes about themselves, other cultures, and history. Many of the programs of Elderhostel promote interpersonal relationships, competence, establishing identity, and becoming autonomous. Of particular interest is the reference to travel, and how travel accelerated the learning process. The overall interaction of social contact, travel, and the learning process fostered change in these women. Similar is a study by Masberg & Silverman (1996) that attempts to capture the phenomenology of the participant's travelers while visiting heritage sites. The qualitative study found that participants' outcomes included internal and external knowledge, social benefits, aesthetic experiences, and highly personalized learning situations. These issues of andragogy also seem to be best captured by a qualitative description of participants (Masberg & Silverman).

Travel and Andragogy

In summary I refer to a study by Jamal & Hollinshead (2000), who acknowledge the impact of travel to bring about change. Although the dynamics of travel may be "messy, evolving, and shifting" (p. 71), this study discusses the difficulties in travel research and indicates the importance of qualitative data in delineating findings. These dynamics of travel are in five categories. 1. Gaze - travel results in a new way of seeing. 2. Identify - a new way of being, actually a re-creation of the self as a result of travel. 3. Changing sensations, new experiences - more than just a trip, travel is actually an escape from and an escape to. 4. Performative sites - a cultural invention in a new spectrum of cultural possibilities. This description of travel as postmodern humaneness and empowering restlessness indicates that the traveler is seeing history, geography, and him/herself in un-objective and contested territories. Travel becomes a battleground between various cultures, times, and personally internal emotions. 5. A new way of enlightenment and knowing - this nomadic empowerment takes place when individuals can re-understand and re-think their cultural and national heritages.

Jamal and Hollinshead (2000) challenge researchers to a New criteria, new dialogues, new perspectives in qualitative research to

help understand and explain the phenomena of travel and tourism and to help us understand in a myriad of empowering, enabling, and ennobling ways the fashion by which travel and tourism may be seen to threaten or enrich the cultural environmental and other resources of our various historical, societal, global, and cosmological inheritances (p. 79).

In response to Jamal and Hollingshead (2000), a school of travel based on andragogy can help to meet this need. Educational travel and issues of education deserve equal treatment as hotel, location, and psychology of the traveler. There is a need for educators to address the emptiness found in mass tourism; many tourists are seeking more than merely spending time following consumer oriented tour groups. Educational travel is increasing and is helping to meet this demand.

Andragogy is one part of adult education that is uniquely suited to meet the evolving dynamics and needs of travelers. Certainly travel has a right and a potential for rest, relaxation, and respite. Yet, lying within the very suitcase of the traveler is the potential for daily teachable moments throughout the experiences of travel. It is time for educators to critically address this growing industry; it is time for educators to help realign the mission of travel from consumerism to the needs of the traveler. Research in this paper has indicated that interaction with locals, preparation for the trip, having expert study guides, self-directed planning, length of stay, journaling and discussion have the potential to foster education and meaningful travel. These nicely coincide with philosophy of andragogy especially, mutual planning, an environment for participative learning, and discussing and chronicling one's experiences. When people begin to see that travel can be a type of school based on ideas of andragogy, then tourism decreases and the travel increases. These new travel scholars can impact the world by carrying this new information around the globe.

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